

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in males next to lung cancer. It occurs mostly in the age group 60 years and older. Continuous exposure of the prostate to the male hormone testosterone probably plays a role in the development of malignancy; genetic as well as dietary factors have also been implicated. Screening for prostate cancer has an important role to play in early diagnosis of the disease. It can be done by digital rectal examination, a transrectal ultrasound and/or a PSA blood test. It should start at age 50 years. With a strong family history the recommended starting age for screening is 40 years.

Being a relatively slow-growing cancer, long-term survivals are seen even in individuals with widespread disease.

To establish a diagnosis and to determine the extent of disease the following investigations are useful:

- Biopsy of the prostate to confirm the presence of cancer and to establish the nature thereof
- Isotope scans if indicated
- Chest X-ray
- Cystoscopy (endoscopic examination of the bladder)
- Blood and/or urine analysis

Your doctor may require further investigations depending on your symptoms at presentation.

Treatment options

Treatment will depend on the nature and extent of the disease as well as on your general state of health.

Watchful waiting, radical surgery, various forms of radiation therapy and hormonal therapy are all used in the treatment of this disease